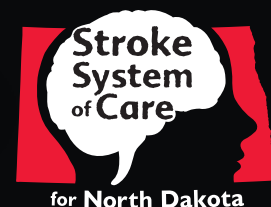




## ***FAST* Access to Stroke Care**



# **Your Risk of Stroke**

Lifestyle factors can greatly increase your chances of experiencing a stroke in your lifetime. Make changes now, because controlling risk factors can prevent 8 out of 10 strokes. Risk factors are cumulative; if you remove or reduce one risk factor, you can significantly reduce your overall risk.

### **Your risk of stroke increases if...**

**You have diabetes, hypertension or high cholesterol.** To get these conditions under control, talk with your doctor. High blood pressure is the number one risk factor associated with first time strokes.

**You are overweight with body mass index (BMI)** of 25 or higher. To calculate your BMI, visit the CDC's BMI webpage at [www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi/](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi/) or talk to your doctor.

**You smoke tobacco**, e-cigarettes or are exposed to secondhand smoke at home or work. Cigarette smoke doubles the risk of a clot-caused stroke and can quadruple the chances of a hemorrhagic stroke because of damage to the blood vessels. Call 1.800.QUIT.NOW or visit [www.ndhealth.gov/ndquits](http://www.ndhealth.gov/ndquits).

**You have a family history of stroke.** You are at greater risk if a parent, grandparent, brother or sister has had a stroke.

**You are over the age of 55.** Although stroke can happen at any age, and more younger adults are having strokes, the chance of a stroke doubles for every decade over the age of 55.

**You have the irregular heartbeat known as atrial fibrillation.** This causes blood to pool in the heart, which may allow a clot to form and travel to the brain. "Afib" is present in about one out of five strokes.

**You eat a high-fat, low-fiber diet.** A diet high in saturated fats may double your risk of stroke. On the other hand, eating whole grains and fruits and vegetables may reduce your risk of stroke by 20 to 30 percent.

**You exercise less than 150 minutes a week.** Exercise helps manage several risk factors: it lowers blood pressure, boosts good cholesterol levels, controls blood sugar and assists weight loss. Women who walk two or more hours a week can reduce risk of any type of stroke by 30 percent.

**You drink more than one or two drinks of alcohol a day.** More than one drink a day for women, or more than two drinks for men, can increase the risk of stroke. Excessive alcohol use in middle age has been associated with stroke more than the top risk factors such as diabetes and hypertension.

**Know the signs of stroke and call 9-1-1 for the fastest access to the Stroke System of Care for North Dakota.**